

The mission of the Office of Motor Carrier and Highway Safety is to develop and promote, in coordination with other Departmental modes, data-driven, analysis-based, and innovative programs to achieve continuous safety improvements in the Nation's highway system, intermodal connections, and motor carrier operations. The Office of Motor Carrier Research and Standards manages the safety regulatory program and the central research management function for Motor Carrier and Highway Safety.

There are eight major research and technology focus areas: regulatory evaluation and reform; compliance and enforcement; driver training and performance management; driver alertness and fatigue; driver physical qualifications; car-truck proximity; HAZMAT safety and cargo tank integrity; and crash causation and profiling.

*Car-truck proximity* involves studies of the interaction of trucks with proximal "other road users" such as cars, light trucks, and vans.



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## Share the Road Campaign Research Study

### Introduction

With the enactment of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), Congress recognized the need to educate the general motoring public about certain characteristics of commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) and their operation, in order that both drivers of passenger vehicles and CMVs share the road safely.

The *Share the Road Research Study* final report reviews and documents the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Motor Carrier and Highway Safety (OMCHS) Share the Road program called the No-Zone Campaign. The No-Zone is a highway safety term used to describe danger areas around CMVs where crashes are most likely to occur. Blind spots represent the most common No-Zones, where passenger vehicles may disappear from the view of truck or bus drivers. Another No-Zone is the area directly in front of CMVs; many crashes occur when passenger vehicles cut sharply in front of CMVs and brake suddenly. **Figure 1** illustrates the four major No-Zones.

The No-Zone Campaign educates the motoring public about how to safely share the road with CMVs, and about a CMV's limitations in terms of maneuverability, stopping distance, and blind spots. By educating the public and working with other organizations concerned with highway safety, the goal of the No-Zone Campaign is to reduce fatalities, injuries, and property damage caused by passenger and commercial vehicle crashes.

### Purpose

The purpose of this study was to conduct a research project to improve the No-Zone public outreach campaign. The study had three main objectives:

- to evaluate and review the current No-Zone Campaign;
- to identify similar programs; and
- to recommend options for establishing a Share the Road coalition.

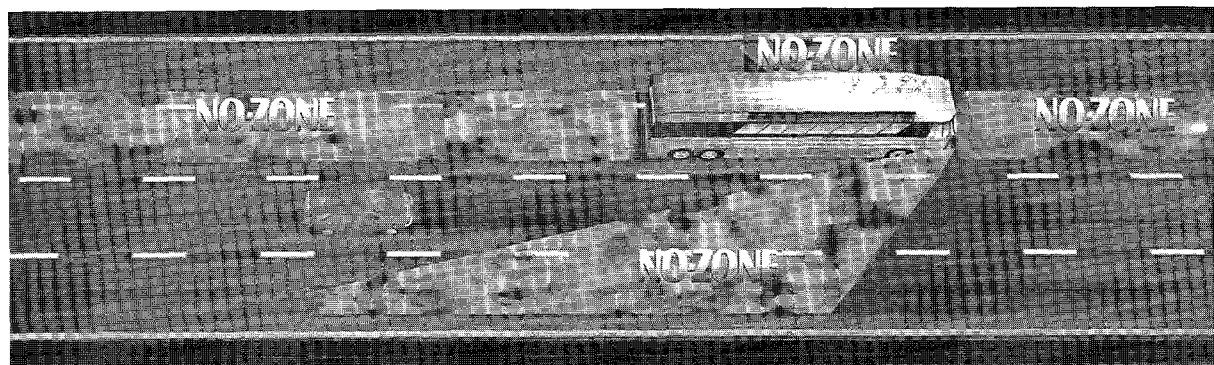
The study was structured to encourage open communication between federal and non-federal stakeholders in order to identify, inventory, and evaluate current goals, efforts, and successes.

### No-Zone Campaign Evaluation

The scope of the No-Zone Campaign review included three tasks: (1) to identify, inventory, and review current federal No-Zone efforts; (2) to determine public acceptance of the No-Zone Campaign and its messages using focus groups; and (3) to determine the media exposure of the No-Zone Campaign public service announcements (PSAs).

**Figure 1.**

No-Zones are the areas around **commercial** motor vehicles where crashes are most likely to occur.



### Review Goals and Activities

Researchers interviewed OMCHS staff working on the No-Zone Campaign to gather information about the program goals, objectives, and implementation strategies, in order to identify accomplishments and evaluate future program activities. Interviews focused on OMCHS staff objectives for the program and the extent to which the program is complying with those intentions.

The principal goal of the No-Zone Campaign is to increase motorist awareness of CMV limitations. The research found that the No-Zone Campaign achieved significant accomplishments in a short time and its reach continues to expand. The Campaign's safety message has been heard at places such as highway rest areas, schools, conventions, conferences, and driver education classes.

### Campaign Acceptance and Effectiveness

To evaluate public acceptance and the effectiveness of the Campaign, eight focus groups were conducted from June to July 1997; two with high school students who had received No-Zone Campaign information, and six with general adult population drivers. The adult drivers were divided into groups according to age, and the focus groups were conducted in Arizona, Georgia, and Ohio, in order to evaluate regional differences.

The findings of the focus groups indicate that the No-Zone Campaign messages are highly effective in communicating the dangers inherent in CMV interactions with passenger vehicles and in providing useful safety information for drivers. Participants reportedly found the "No-Zone" term to be clear, concise, and easily understood, and responded that No-Zone messages helped them to accept responsibility for their safety in car-truck interactions.

### Media Exposure

Since the No-Zone Campaign's inception in 1994, television, radio, and print PSAs have been distributed throughout the United States. To document where PSAs were placed, and to track their airtime or print space, the FHWA hired media monitoring companies to distribute the PSAs and collect data on their placement; the data contained in this report were tracked during specific time frames from 1994-1997. Researchers found:

- Television PSA placements received over 112 hours of free airtime. During 575 days of tracking, No-Zone PSAs were aired an average of 23 times per day.
- Radio placements received 283 hours of free airtime. During an 8-month period analyzed for this study, seven No-Zone radio PSAs were measured and enumerated. Cumulatively, the PSA messages aired close to 34,000 times to listening audiences of approximately 63 million people.
- Print PSAs appeared in over 20,000 newspapers. The placements began in November 1995 and were tracked until June 1997. No-Zone print PSAs consisted of creative illustrations and phrases to attract readers and educate them about the No-Zone.

### Similar Program Review

A search for similar programs was conducted to determine if other organizations have a Share the Road public outreach program similar to the No-Zone Campaign. For a program to be considered a "similar program," it had to specifically address the safety concerns of passenger and commercial vehicles sharing the road. These concerns include information

about a CMV's blind spots, stopping distance requirements, turning requirements, and overall limitations.

### Methodology

Highway safety leaders at 381 organizations were contacted by telephone and mail, and asked to submit their Share the Road informative material for review. The review and analysis of the information took into account the type of safety information provided, target audiences, geographic regions served, public outreach approaches, and types of motor vehicles targeted.

Researchers also contacted the Departments of Motor Vehicles in all 50 States and the District of Columbia to collect state passenger vehicle driver manuals for analysis to determine if the manuals contain Share the Road information.

### Findings

Of the highway safety organizations that were contacted, 357 organizations responded to the study and 20 organizations were identified as having programs similar to the No-Zone Campaign.

All of the 20 programs that were identified as having comparable Share the Road outreach programs **provide motorists with information about how to safely share the road with CMVs. The most common outreach tools included brochures and booklets, Web sites, videos, merchandise, and public service announcements.**

Each program was aimed at the passenger vehicle driver and none targeted a specific passenger vehicle type. The programs also indicated that their Share the Road material can be used for age groups ranging from high school students to senior citizens. In comparison with the identified Share the Road similar programs, the No-Zone Campaign does not include some of the same target audiences and safety topics. For example, some similar programs include safety topics that are not specifically addressed by the No-Zone Campaign, such as speeding, signaling, fatigue, and inclement weather.

When researchers analyzed the 51 driver manuals of the 50 States and the District of Columbia, they found that 17 manuals did not include any information about sharing the road with CMVs. Figure 2 compares the information provided by each State. The amount and type of information provided in the 34 state manuals that include Share the Road references varies; the most common information describes blind spots, the danger of tailgating, and general information about keeping a safe distance from CMVs.

## Share the Road Coalition Analysis

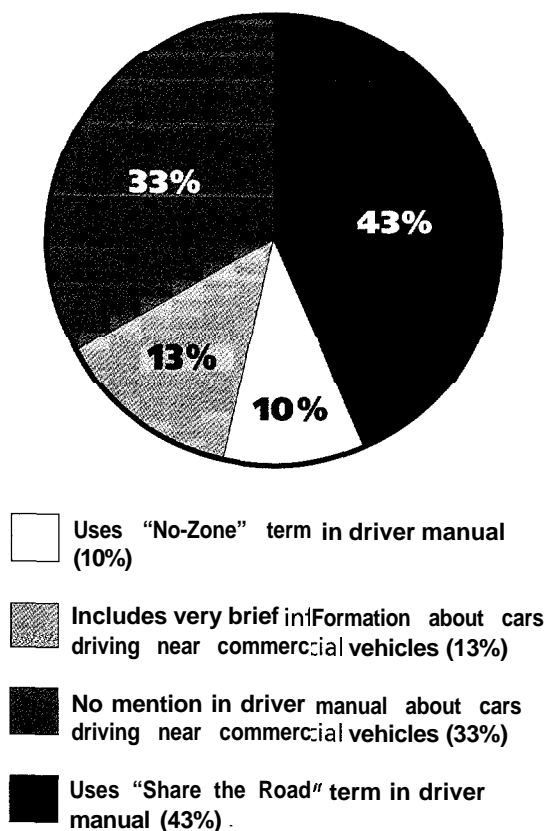
Communicating educational messages about driving safely around CMVs, as is the case with the Share the Road effort, may be accomplished more easily and quickly by attracting the right allies to the effort.

### Creation of a Share the Road Coalition

In February 1998, OMCHS identified more than 30 highway safety groups it considers key stakeholders in the Share the Road effort and that support the goal of educating the motoring public about the danger areas around CMVs. These safety leaders were invited to participate in the first Share the Road Coalition Meeting in Cleveland, Ohio on March 31, 1998.

The purpose of this meeting was to gather a representative group of Share the Road stakeholders to discuss the feasibility of a coalition. Many goals and action items discussed by the participants indicated that the formation of a coalition would advance the groups' highway safety agendas. In June 1998, the formation of the Share the Road Coalition was announced during International Highway

Figure 2.  
Percentage of Share the Road Information  
in States' Driver Manuals.



### Researcher

This study was performed by Abacus Technology Corporation, 5454 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1100, Chevy Chase, MD 20815. Contract No. DTFH61-96-C-00104.

### Distribution

This Tech Brief is being distributed according to a standard distribution. Direct distribution is being made to the Resource Centers and Divisions.

### Availability

The study final report will be available from the National Technical Information Service, Telephone: (703) 605-6000.

### Key Words

No-Zone, truck safety, automobile safety, blind spot, driver education, Share the Road, unsafe driving, safe driving, highway safety, traffic safety, bus safety.

### Notice

This Tech Brief is disseminated under the sponsorship of the Department of Transportation in the interest of information exchange. The Tech Brief provides a synopsis of the study's final publication. The Tech Brief does not establish policies or regulations, nor does it imply FHWA endorsement of the conclusions or recommendations. The U.S. Government assumes no liability for its contents or their use.

Transportation Safety Week. A second meeting was held in October 1998 to prioritize the identified goals of the coalition.

### Coalition Recommendations

The Share the Road Coalition meetings brought together key activists in the effort, explored some of their concerns and identified goals the group believed it could accomplish. The near-term actions necessary to move the Share the Road Coalition forward are:

- Choose leadership;
- Hold a coalition meeting;
- Identify and prioritize goals;
- Agree on a strategy to achieve the goals;
- Establish a timetable for achieving the goals; and
- Recruit enthusiastic volunteers.

### Improving the No-Zone Campaign

In the *Share the Road Campaign Research Study*, researchers provided recommendations on how to expand the existing No-Zone Campaign activities, improve less successful activities, and initiate new activities. These recommendations covered both management strategies and educational and outreach strategies.

Recommended strategies to help improve the management of the No-Zone Campaign included updating the Campaign's near- and long-term goals, recruiting an outreach coordinator at each OMCHS Resource Center and state office; evaluating and quantifying No-Zone Campaign activities; and developing a partner recognition process. To prepare for the continued growth of the Campaign, and to manage the changes that will take place, the study recommends that management controls be established to track the Campaign's progress, deliver credible and clear messages, and to coordinate the efforts of many highway safety leaders working toward the same goal.

Concerning education and outreach strategies, the study recommends that the No-Zone Campaign be expanded to include Share the Road messages that pertain to other vehicle types, and that many high-profile No-Zone activities be duplicated and expanded in many locations around the country. The study also recommends that new educational and outreach programs be complemented by strategies to build on current momentum. Some recommended strategic goals included: establishing relationships with interested organizations; including Share the Road information in all state driver manuals; placing Share the Road information in driver education textbooks; and establishing wider options for increased placement of No-Zone messages.



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